

defenders of the poor, the economically downtrodden. But it is all an act, and Americans know it. Even President Clinton's top economic adviser, Joseph Stieglitz, wrote in an economic textbook that, "A higher minimum wage does not seem a particularly useful way to help the poor."

If liberals and those labor bosses were really convinced about the poor and concerned about them, they would support tax relief, that \$500 per child tax credit. They would lower interest rates by supporting a balanced budget, and also they would seek economic growth.

LEGISLATION WHICH PROTECTS OUR PLANET SHOULD BE A CONGRESSIONAL PRIORITY

(Mr. WARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, let me say first for the record that the buying power of the minimum wage is the lowest it has been in 40 years. To deny an increase in the minimum wage is reprehensible.

Mr. Speaker, today I have risen to speak as we approach Earth Day, a day that Americans across the country come together to focus on the environment. I would like to call attention to the atrocious environmental record that the Republican majority has created. At a time when the EPA estimates that nearly 40 percent of the Nation's waters are unfit for fishing and swimming, we would think that clean water would be a priority.

However, Mr. Speaker, the so-called Clean Water Act that the Republican majority passed last year, written mostly by corporate polluters, would create waivers and exemptions from previously established basic standards for our rivers, lakes, streams, and oceans.

In short, protecting our environment means protecting our future. We have been entrusted to provide a future of clean air, lush forests, and clean water for our children and our children's children. Legislation which protects our planet should be a priority, not the Republican majority's laws that have encouraged its destruction.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1202

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1202.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMP). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

LET US FOCUS NATIONAL EFFORTS ON WINNING THE WAR AGAINST DRUGS

(Mr. ZELIFF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ZELIFF. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Illinois, DENNY HASTERT, the gentleman from Florida, JOHN MICA, the gentleman from Indiana, MARK SOUDER, and I just returned from a counternarcotics trip to Mexico, Panama, Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru. We met with various leaders in the anti-drug effort, including Peru's President Fujimori and Colombia's National Police Chief Serrano. We also met the brave Americans from several of our Government agencies in those countries, with armed patrols who went into the jungles of Bolivia and Peru where the bulk of the world's coca leaf is grown and processed in primitive drug labs.

We watched as Bolivian antidrug units destroyed a pit where cocaine was made to ship to Colombia and Mexico, and then be shipped into our country. The deadly cocaine and heroin destroying our communities starts in the jungle and ends up in the streets of New Hampshire.

We have people risking and even losing their lives on the front line. We need to get a commitment from our people and our national leaders to refocus our efforts on winning this war. Drugs and crime together are our Nation's No. 1 national security threat. We need to get everybody, from the President and Congress to teachers, parents, and media, talking about this threat to our Nation. We also need a plan that puts a priority on educating our people about the risk of narcotics, that includes treatment for those who are already addicted, as well as sufficient funds for law enforcement interdiction and eradication. We can win the war on drugs if we can put a man on the moon. We need to get moving now.

BEWARE REPUBLICAN EARTH DAY ASSAULT

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Saturday is Earth Day, a day to celebrate our environment—our Earth—our home. We must protect it; we have no other place to go.

We have a responsibility to make our world a little greener and a little cleaner—to make it safer for our children and unborn generations.

The Republican leadership does not agree.

Republicans passed the dirty water bill. Their Superfund reform lets corporate polluters off the hook. Who benefits? Polluters. Who suffers? Each and every one of us. There is more pollution in the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat.

The American people know what you are doing. They have seen the Republican assault on our environment—and they are worried. Be careful with your

publicity stunts this Earth Day—the American people will not be fooled.

AMERICA'S ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS CAN BE SOLVED ONLY AT THE STATE AND COMMUNITY LEVEL

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, let me assure my good friend, the gentleman from Georgia, that after the hue and cry and the celebrations this Earth Day, many committed conservatives will stand there to clean up the mess left by so many so-called environmentalists.

It is interesting to hear the lines provided today, Mr. Speaker, from our friends on the liberal side, their carefully crafted scripts engaging in playground taunts. Let me state unequivocally and for the record that the new majority is in favor of clean air and clean water, and yes, restoring balance to our laws, recognizing that Phoenix is not the same as Philadelphia, or that Flagstaff is not the same as Fargo, ND, and relying on people on the front lines to solve their problems in the 50 States where there are departments of environmental quality, and in the communities, understanding that there are differences.

The key to solving the problem, Mr. Speaker, resides with the American people, not with the Washington bureaucrats, and no amount of name-calling can change that fact.

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REPUBLICAN THREATS TO THE ENVIRONMENT

(Mr. JACKSON of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the founder of the annual April 22 Earth Day, former Senator Gaylord Nelson, said the record of the 104th Congress shows this to be the worst environmental Congress ever. The majority leadership in this body has attempted to roll back years of environmental progress to provide favors for its special interest friends.

Because of budget cuts by the majority in this Congress, the Environmental protection Agency has missed thousands of inspections and enforcement actions. This same majority has shifted costs from polluters to taxpayers, while cleanups have been slowed at 400 toxic waste sites and stopped at 60 Superfund sites. Because funds to implement six administrative rules have been cut, hundreds of millions of pounds of pollution entered our water supply that could have been prevented.

While never aggressively pursued, adequately funded or fully enforced,